



Appalachian Trail Conservancy Media Release, May 1, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHAT: See the First Appalachian Trail Museum Exhibit:
“MacKaye and Avery: Where the Journey Began”

WHERE: Appalachian Trail Conservancy Visitor Center
799 Washington Street
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425

WHEN: National Trails Day
Saturday, June 2, 2007
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Harpers Ferry, WV. May 1, 2007 – The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the Appalachian Trail Museum Society will partner on National Trails Day (Saturday, June 2) to dedicate an exhibit devoted to the two men most responsible for the Trail’s creation: Benton MacKaye and Myron Avery.

The A.T. Museum Society’s first exhibit will illustrate the vastly different contributions of two men: MacKaye, the thinker and dreamer who first proposed and popularized the idea of the Appalachian Trail in the 1920s, and Avery, the hard-charging leader who mobilized a force of volunteers to get the job of trail-building done. MacKaye’s typewriter, pipe, and hat on display symbolize the contemplative nature of his contribution. Avery’s modified bicycle wheel, which he used in measuring the 2,000-mile route, convey his more vigorous, hands-on role.

Appalachian Trail leaders and experts will deliver remarks at the 11 a.m. unveiling at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in Harpers Ferry. On hand will be ATC’s executive director, Dave Startzell; A.T. Park Manager, Pam Underhill; Potomac A.T. Club (PATC) president Lee Shaffer; A.T. Museum Society president Larry Luxenberg; and MacKaye biographer Larry Anderson. Visitors will also have a chance to see ATC’s new hiker and volunteer lounge.

During the afternoon visitors can participate in a variety of special events that will provide opportunities to learn about the history of the Trail, the A.T. today, and to experience the A.T. firsthand in Harpers Ferry. After an informal lunch reception at ATC Headquarters, visitors can take in two short films: *On the Beaten Path*, with footage of MacKaye, Avery, legendary first thru-hiker Earl Shaffer, and blind hiker Bill Irwin. Excerpts of *Wilderness and Spirit*, commissioned specially for this event, will feature scenery and wildlife of the A.T.’s “greatest mountain,” Katahdin.

Historian Larry Anderson will discuss “Crossing Paths on Bake Oven Knob: A Pivotal Moment on the Appalachian Trail with Myron Avery and Benton MacKaye.” PATC volunteers will lead a family-friendly walk, as well as a more challenging hike up Loudoun Heights. Additional hikes and activities will be offered by Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in the lower town, where ATC and the A.T. Museum Society will also have tables.

For more information, visit www.appalachiantrail.org, www.atmuseum.org, and www.nps.gov/hafe, or call the contacts below.

Contacts

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